

Appl. No. 10/649,019  
Amdt. dated August 30, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2006

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**REMARKS**

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Final Office Action mailed June 9, 2006. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following comments. Claims 1 and 8 have been amended for clarity as well as to include the limitations of claims 3 and 10, respectively, which have subsequently been canceled. Support for the clarifying amendments made to claims 1 and 8 may be found, for example, at page 12, lines 27 to page 14, line 13 of the specification. Claim 11 has been amended to update its dependency. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowance for claim 7 and the indication of potential allowability of claims 3, 10 and 11. No new matter has been added as a result of these amendments.

The claims have been amended for clarity, and to move the elements of allowable dependent claims into their respective independent claims. Thus, the amendments presented herein do not raise any new issues. Therefore, consideration and entry of this After-Final Amendment is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-2 and 8-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Okada et al., EP 0 965 710 A2. Claim 1 (from which claim 2 depends) and claim 8 (from which claim 9 depends) have been amended to include the elements previously found in claims 3 and 10, respectively, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 4 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Okada et al., EP 0 965 710 A2, in view of Asakura et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,778,065. Okada et al. are distinguished above as failing to describe the invention of claims 1 and 8, from which claims 4 and 12 depend. Claims 4 and 12 add further limitations and are similarly patentable over Okada et al. Asakura et al. are not believed to remedy the noted shortcomings of Okada et al. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

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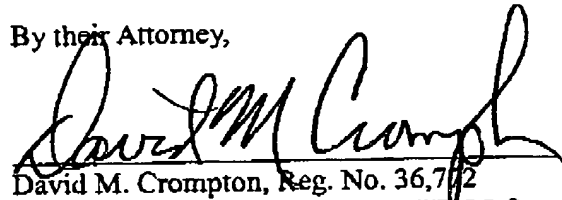
Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,

Toshimasa Shibagaki et al.

By their Attorney,

Date: 8/30/06



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